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**REMARKS**

Claims 1 and 3-18 are pending in the present application after this amendment adds new claims 11-18. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, and 10 are amended. No new matter is added by the amendments and new claims. In particular, the amendment to claim 1 deletes limitation and makes the claim depend from allowable claim 7. The amendments to claims 4, 6, and 8 merely change dependencies so that the claims depend ultimately depend from one of allowable claims 7 and 9. The amendment to claim 10 deletes limitations and adds some of the features of allowable claim 7. The new claims are also supported throughout the specification and figures. For instance, new claims 11 and 12 include features previously claimed in claim 10, and new claims 17 and 18 include features previously claimed in original claims 2 and 3. Applicants therefore submit that the amendments do not raise new issues and/or place the claims in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the amendments be entered. In view of the amendments and the following remarks reconsideration and allowance of the instant application are respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claims 7 and 9 are allowable. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to depend from claim 7, and therefore these claims, as well as claim 5, which depends from claim 4, are in condition for allowance. Claim 8 has been amended to depend from claim 9 and is therefore also in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 4, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by United States Patent Publication No. 2002/0159343 to Fujimoto (hereinafter referred to as Fujimoto). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to depend from an allowable claim, as discussed above, and are therefore also allowable. Claim 10 has been amended to include some of the

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features of allowable claim 7. In particular, new claim 10 recites the features of generating a bottom hold signal of the light reception signal as the comparison reference signal, and generating the comparison signal which takes the first signal status when the comparison reference signal came short of the predetermined threshold value, and takes the second signal status when the comparison reference signal exceeded the predetermined threshold value. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references disclose or suggest this feature, and therefore claim 10 is allowable over the references.

Claims 5, 6, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Fujimoto in view of Japanese Publication No. 10-172147 to Toru (hereinafter referred to as Toru). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 5 depends from claim 4, which now depends from claim 7, and claim 6 has been amended to depend from new claim 17, which depends from claim 7, and therefore these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 7 is allowable. Claim 8 has been amended to depend from claim 9 and is therefore also in condition for allowance.

New claims 11-15 depend from claim 9, and therefore each of these claims is allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims are allowable.

New claim 16 recites a method of reproducing an optical disk that includes, *inter alia*, the steps of rotating an optical disk having at least one of a first area and a second area; generating a light reception signal of a spot light reflected by the optical disk after being irradiated therewith; generating a comparison reference signal from the light reception signal; and generating a comparison signal containing at least one of a first signal status corresponding to the first area and a second signal status corresponding to the second area, by comparing the comparison reference signal with a predetermined threshold value. The method of claim 16 also includes

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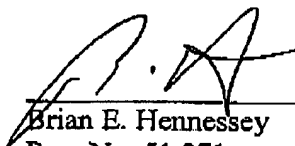
observing signal status of the comparison signal at least throughout a duration during which the spot light goes round once on the optical disk, and making a decision, based on the observed result, about in which of the first area and the second area the spot light falls; detecting a peak level of the light reception signal when the spot light was irradiated onto a mirror surface on the optical disk; and generating the predetermined threshold value based on a level within the peak level. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references disclose or suggest all of these features, and therefore claim 16 is allowable over the references.

New claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 7, and therefore each of these claims is allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims are allowable.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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